

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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## A SILENT WITNESS.

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AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

### CHAPTER V. A RENDEZVOUS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the excitement under which he was labouring, and the despair which seemed to have settled at his heart, Walter Danby slept well that night in the clean fresh-smelling hard bed at the Lion, and had pleasant dreams, in which Anne Studley—not in the least like herself, but still a beneficent angel—played a prominent part.

When young Danby opened his eyes the next morning, he was at once conscious of all the folly that he had committed on the previous night, and never before had the world seemed so distasteful to him. His eyes were heavy, his head throbbed, and to collect his thoughts sufficiently for proper deliberation as to what had best be done, seemed to him an impossibility; so he made his way to the bottom of the inn garden, where a punt was moored for the convenience of bathers, and, after two or three headers into the cool river, he seemed refreshed and reinvigorated. His mind, too, was so much clearer that, as he seated himself on his bed, in a pause during dressing, he was able to face his position, and to consider how he could best get out of the scrape into which he had fallen.

"The money must be paid, there's no doubt of that," he said to himself, "and paid at once. The captain did not seem to see the idea of any delay, and, as the day has been agreed upon, it must be kept to. Was it fairly won? that's the question that's racking me just now. Last night I

would have sworn that I saw him shuffling with the cards under the table, and this morning, after my night's sleep, and all the clearing effects of my dip, I am of the same mind. If he had not been Anne's father I would have taken him by the throat, and—what a horrible idea, having such an old scoundrel for one's father-in-law! And yet for her I would chance that or anything else. How sweet she is! so calm, and quiet, and resigned! never grumbling the least at the way in which she is treated; and it is too bad to bring a bright intelligent girl of that kind to a place like this, and bury her alive, without a soul to speak to, or—a hundred and fifty-three pounds! How I could ever have been idiot enough to go on playing until I had lost such a sum as that! Only one way to meet it, since the captain's so keen after his money, and that is to sell out Aunt Luscombe's five hundred pound legacy, which I had set apart as a nest-egg in case I ever married. What a charming girl that is; how modest and reticent—and how remarkably good-looking! I wonder whether she knows I care for her—at least of course she does, every girl divines that in an instant—but whether she cares for me! What can old Studley have said to her when he noticed me at the station? Something not too flattering, no doubt. Wonderful fellow to turn up kings, the old man; it could not be all fair! And yet I've no proof, and even if I had, I doubt whether, under the circumstances, I ought to make any row. The best way will be to hold my tongue and never to play again. I'll bring down the money on Sunday, because that will give me a chance of seeing Anne, but I won't dream of stopping, as the captain proposed, or at all events of playing. I'm

sick and disgusted with the life I'm leading now, and there's no chance of promotion in the bank. I've half a mind to cut it, and see what good I could do by emigrating. I would, too, if Anne Studley would come with me. I wonder whether she would; there would be no harm in asking her, and she's just cut out for an emigrant's wife—full of patience and endurance and hope. Heath has never turned up, so I suppose he slept at the captain's. By jove, I must push along, or I shall miss the 'bus to the station!"

But he was in time for that accommodating vehicle; and, as they drove past the captain's door, Heath issued forth and climbed to the seat on the roof next to Danby. His night's work did not seem to have affected him, for he was as cleanly shaved, as neat and precise in his dress as usual. When they were on their way to London in the train, happening to have the carriage to themselves, Heath took advantage of the opportunity to speak to Danby about the card-playing, which had taken place on the previous night. "You lost again heavily, I understand?" he said.

"Yes!" said Danby, with a blush, for he always liked to be thought well of by Heath. "Yes, much more than I could afford."

"I cannot understand your being so extremely foolish," said Heath, coldly. "I am not a card player myself, but I imagine I could judge in a minute when I was over-matched, and if I then continued playing I should only have my vanity to thank. Captain Studley has not merely greater judgment and greater coolness, but far greater experience than you, and all these things tell, I should imagine, in an encounter. Moreover, if those trustees in whom the management of the bank is now vested were to learn that you were gambling, it might seriously affect your position there. My advice to you is—pay up, and have done with it."

"Do you know, Heath," commenced Danby, "do you know—," he was just going to tell Heath of his suspicions of the captain's foul play, but he thought better of it. "I mean, did the captain tell you I promised to take him the money on Sunday next, when he said he would give me my revenge?"

"Take him the money, pay him and come away! Don't play any more, that's my advice," said Heath; "moreover, you won't have the chance, as Studley must

devote nearly all his Sunday to me. Besides, he talks of going abroad next week for some little time."

"Will he take his daughter with him?" asked Danby, anxiously.

"I don't know, I didn't enquire," said Heath; "the subject didn't interest me."

Walter Danby found he could not settle to the bank work that day. The dip in the cold river had but a transient effect, towards noon his head was aching as badly as before, and, worse still, his mind was running on something very different from dry books and ledgers. What Heath had said about Captain Studley's intended visit to the Continent upset him very much. For the probability was that Anne would not be left at Loddonford by herself, but would be sent off somewhere; and even were she left at the cottage, he could never venture to call there in the captain's absence. He could not bear the idea of giving her up, of never seeing her again, just when he was beginning to hope that she took some interest in him. And yet what was he to do? Her father would laugh at the idea of giving his daughter's hand to a clerk in a bank with a salary of a hundred and twenty pounds a year. His only chance would be the emigration notion. He would have a tolerable sum to start with, after paying the captain's debt; he could get good introductions in Australia, and if Anne would only share his lot, he would endeavour to prove by zeal and industry that he really deserved her.

After bank hours Walter was in the habit of walking round the West-end, and occasionally of dining at that club, to be a member of which had, at one time, seemed to him to sweeten and flavour existence, but on this occasion he took his dinner at an old-fashioned chop-house in Fleet-street, and afterwards made his way to his lodging, which was situated in South Molton-street, a queer duct which leads from Oxford the commercial to Brook the aristocratic, and which, though so closely bordering on fashionable ground, is unmistakably homely, unpretending, and tolerably cheap. Here, at the top of one of the smaller houses, Walter had a roomy attic, which he had furnished with a view to combine the comforts of bed and sitting-room. There was a writing-table in the window, and against the wall a book-case fairly filled with something beside railway book-stall literature, and several Burlington Arcade prints of languishing ladies. The

evening was chill, but there was no fire laid in the little grate, nor indeed, even if there had been, would Walter have risked offending his landlady by lighting it. So, after kindling his lamp, and filling his pipe, he threw his travelling plaid over his shoulders and seated himself at the writing-table. Composition did not come easily to him; moreover, he had not, when he sat down, that certainty as to what he intended to say, which is essential to the comfortable progress of a writer; but after a couple of hours, during which the atmosphere had become thick with smoke, and the floor strewn with blotted sheets, he had achieved something like the following:—

“ You must not be offended with me for writing to you, as a letter is the only means by which I can hope at present to attract your attention, and hold you as my listener for a few minutes; and you will not, I hope, think me presumptuous in writing to you, after so short an acquaintance, when I tell you that your reply will influence the future tenour of my life. I suppose you must have seen that, from the first time of seeing you, I was irresistibly attracted towards you. If you have noticed my manner I hope you have not been annoyed. I have not, I confess, attempted to disguise my feelings, as there was nothing in them of which I felt ashamed. But I should not have spoken or written to you in this way, at all events just yet, but for circumstances. I am going to take a step which may make or mar me. I am going to give up the situation which I hold in the bank, and to emigrate to Australia. I know it may be considered foolish to throw away a certainty, but I cannot remain in London. I have done nothing really wrong, but I have been very silly, and I feel that I must cast off all association with the place. I tell you this in all honour, as few ought to know it. I have done no real harm, but I have spent more money than I ought in various ways; and I wish to get away, not because I am afraid of being again led into temptation, for I believe I should have strength of mind to resist, but because I am honestly ashamed of myself, and want to try and forget my folly in a new life. I have money enough to make a fair start in a new land, but I want to ask you to share my future. If I thought that I was inducing you to leave a thoroughly happy home, where you were truly appreciated, even with all my desire

to make you my wife, I should hesitate before asking this of you. But, situated as you are, about to be thrown on the world to gain your own living, I hope you will not think me selfish in proposing that the start in our new life shall be made together, and that the heavier portion of the burden shall be borne on my shoulders.

“ I do not want an immediate answer from you; think over all I have written, and do not think less favourably because this paper is not filled with protestations of all I feel, and all I profess. If I have judged you rightly, the absence of vows and promises will not cause you to believe that there is any lack of earnestness or sincerity in my proposal. I hope to have your answer from your own lips. I am coming to Loddonford to see Captain Studley, by appointment, at three on Sunday. I shall not be long with him, and I happen to know he will be busy all day. Will you give me five minutes when I come away from him? Five minutes, in which I may learn my whole future career!

“ WALTER DANBY.”

“ It is not very well put! ” said Walter, after reading this document for the last time, and placing it in an envelope, which he addressed to “ Miss Studley, Loddonford, Berks.” “ It does not read right straight off, like the lovers’ letters in novels; but I think it conveys what I mean. Anyhow, it is the best I can do; and Anne will like it better, because she will see at once that it is all my own, and that there’s no flummery about it. And now I’ll get to bed, for I’m pretty well tired. I had no idea that writing things, what they call literary composition, took so much out of a fellow! ”

During the course of the week, Danby looked through his letters with feverish eagerness, but never found one from Anne. He was not exactly disappointed; he had scarcely expected a reply, and he felt tolerably certain that by not writing she intended to keep the appointment he had proposed. Meanwhile, he carried out his business arrangements so far as seeing his brother and realising the little legacy, out of which the gambling debt to Captain Studley was to be paid. He kept his intention of quitting his situation strictly to himself. He said nothing about it in the bank; nor did he mention it to Heath, who, so far from seeking his confidence, seemed to have become more reserved than ever. There was a rumour among the clerks that Heath was to be appointed

manager of the bank at a large salary ; but he himself neither endorsed nor denied it. He worked very hard at his ordinary duties, and, in addition to these, he was engaged, from time to time, with the detectives, who were still trying to solve the mystery of the murder and to trace the missing jewellery, and whose reports and suggestions were invariably submitted to Heath. Walter Danby sometimes thought that the chief cashier's manner had rather changed to him since their last visit to Loddonford together ; but it might, he reasoned with himself, be merely his fancy, as Heath never alluded to the subject.

The captain was not far out when he asserted his idea that young Danby probably lay late on Sunday mornings. There was something too delightful in hearing the clock strike the abhorred hour of usual rising, and then of sinking back once more into the pillow, with the knowledge that no harm could come of it. Sunday was usually a day, too, for dawdling over dressing, and for delicious dalliance with the breakfast, shared by one or two congenial souls, also victims of week-day oppression, and lightened by the perusal of the sporting newspaper. But on this particular Sunday, Walter Danby awoke early, and, having the full sense of the responsibility of all that he had to go through brought before him, he could not go to sleep again, but lay revolving in his mind how he could best put his case to Anne, and what were his chances of winning it.

"I think I made a good point in the letter," he said to himself, "where I told her I should not have had the pluck to take her away from a comfortable home, to share a chance lot with small means ; and heaven knows I meant it. But, even if one had to struggle for a certain time in the bush, carrying out and doing all those things which one reads of in the emigrants' letters which are published in the newspapers, I don't think it could be much worse for her than living a solitary life shut up in that ghastly, tumble-down cottage, surrounded by that miasma-producing jungle. A sort of place which one reads of as haunted by smugglers or coiners, being far away from any other human habitation, and specially adapted for the carrying on of nefarious practices, by Jove ! Fancy a girl of her bright, earnest temperament hidden away in such a rat-hole, without a soul to speak to, or, what to her I should imagine would be almost

worse, sent away to teach the rudiments of English and music to some wretched children, who would hate her and make her life a burden to her, while she had to bear the patronage of their parents ! Besides, there can be no question of filial love or obedience to interfere. One must do the captain the justice to say that he never pretends any excessive affection for his daughter ; and Anne must see that, though, of course, she would never allow it. To take her beyond the contamination of such a father would in itself be something, though she knows nothing and never must learn anything of half his villainy. I wonder whether that, having me down to his place, was a plant ! I can scarcely think so, because, if so, Heath must have been in it—and yet Heath warned me against playing any more with Studley. I don't think the advice necessary though. I shall take him the money this afternoon, and no one will ever find me playing another card during my life !"

It was a bright, warm autumn afternoon, one of those soft, sweet, mellow days which are preferable to the blazing summer's defiant heat, when Walter started from Paddington, and he was anticipating much enjoyment in his walk from the station at Loddonford to the captain's cottage. He was a country-bred young man, having come to London expressly to undertake his duties in Middleham's bank, and still retained many of his country tastes. But as he journeyed downward, the heavy mists rose on all sides from the newly upturned earth, the sun became an opaque red globe, which was rapidly descending towards the horizon, and the whole aspect of the day was changed. Nevertheless, Danby determined to carry out his resolution of walking to the cottage, and, scorning the offers of the flymen, he set out on the road. His good spirits, however, seemed to have vanished with the sunshine. Exercise had generally the effect of rousing him, even when at his lowest ebb ; but this time he tried it in vain. An indefinable sensation of imminent danger, which it was not possible for him to avoid, seemed to be creeping over him. Everything had a melancholy aspect : the gaunt, bare fields, with the never-ending, never-altering furrows, stretching far away out of sight ; the leafless hedges, yet soaking with the previous night's dew, and in which the spider's slender web hung glittering like threads of silver ; the tall, gaunt poplars, through which the

wind breathed its melancholy dirge. There was no thick foliage now to shut out the view of the river; but the river itself, erst so lovely, was now a brown, brawling stream, thick and muddy, and cumbered with the leaves and branches with which its bosom was wind-strewn.

Through the village now, and out on to the open road beyond, where, on week days, one seldom met a soul or heard a sound, save the labourer's deep admonition to his horses, or the sharp clapper of the bird boy, and which, on Sunday, was silent as the grave. The trees dripped with moisture, the path was dank and sodden, and Danby's heart sank within him as he trudged along. Had he done right, after all, in addressing Anne? Would she look upon his letter, written upon so short an acquaintance, as presumptuous and insolent? He must take his chance of that now; and, after all, he felt that in that instance, at least, he had acted well and wisely. What was it that weighed so heavily on him, with such a presentiment of evil to come? Was it a fear of his own stability of purpose, a doubt lest he should be enticed into playing again and losing more money? That could be easily settled by his not seeing the captain at all. He could leave the money, which he had enclosed in an envelope, with Anne or with the servant, saying that he had been too hurried to come in. At all events, he would see Anne first, and consult her upon the matter. If it were not necessary to see the captain, Walter certainly had no desire to press the point. Having made up his mind to this, he determined not to ring the bell, as usual, but to make his way into the garden through a side-gate, which was known to him, by which he could gain the store-room, which Anne had appropriated as a kind of sitting-room, and where he should probably then find her. What his future proceedings would be would all depend on what answer he received from her.

When he reached the high, ivy-grown garden wall, he turned up a little, narrow lane and found the side-gate open. Pushing it quietly, he passed through, and, making his way through the jungle, he gained the house. The street-door was closed, but, walking round, he found that the full-length French window of the store-room was open; and, as it was there he expected to find Anne, he entered. Anne was not there, nor was there much trace of her recent occupation of the room. The

work-table which she had arranged in the window was wheeled into a corner, and the floor was occupied by two or three boxes and portmanteaus, more or less filled with personal effects. Picking his way through these, Walter looked round him, and, having satisfied himself that Anne was not there, was about to retire, when he heard his own name pronounced.

Listening, for a moment, he heard it again. The voice came from the dining-room. The glazed door between it and the room in which he was, was shut, but stooping down and drawing the red curtain a bit on one side, he could distinctly make out the figures of two men, seated at opposite sides of the table, and when they spoke again, he immediately recognised the voices as those of the captain and Heath. "Danby." There it was again! For the life of him, he must stay and listen to what they were saying about him.

"Bring it!" said Heath. "You need not be frightened about that. He has sold out that legacy money on purpose."

"Five hundred, wasn't it?" asked the captain. "A hundred and fifty makes a very small hole in that! It would be a great pity not to indulge his desire for revenge, and let him leave some more behind."

"It would be useless trying, for he won't play any more," said Heath. "He spoke to me about it the other day, and on the whole I rather counselled him to have nothing more to do with it."

"That was friendly," said the captain with bitter emphasis.

"To whom? to him or to you? I say, to both," said Heath, bringing his hand down on the table. "Haven't we got bigger and better things to attend to, that you should be wasting your time winning a few pounds from a boy?"

"Boy or man, it is all the same to me, provided I win; and I confess I'm not rich enough to look upon a hundred and fifty as a 'few' pounds!" grumbled the captain. "However, I suppose you know best. It is full time the 'boy' was come though. He'll be disappointed at not finding Anne, but I sent her off to Mrs. Wells."

"And the servant, has she gone out?" asked Heath.

"With orders not to return till ten at night," said the captain. "The girl stared with astonishment when I told her."

"Well then, if you don't keep Danby chattering, but tell him at once you're sorry you can't give him dinner, as Miss

Studley is out, and you're very busy, we shall have the house all to ourselves. And there is plenty to do, I can tell you. You must have everything clearly written out to submit to Van Stuyvesant, number and weight of the stones, price required, and all the rest of it, or he'll never do any business with you. You might see Monnier in Paris—the old man, mind, not the son, who is timid and chatters too much—and Lassenaye in Brussels, but I don't think you'll do any real good until you get to Amsterdam, and then Van Stuyvesant is your man. No chance of young Danby's being shown into this room, is there?"

"There is no one to show him; you forget the servant is out," said the captain. "We shall hear the bell, and I'll go and let him in."

"Well then, take him straight to your room, and when you've got the money, get rid of him," said Heath. "As he's not coming here, and there's no window towards the front, we may as well be getting on with our business. Is there a match anywhere about?"

"On the mantelshelf in the corner," said the captain. Then Danby heard the sharp scratch of a match, and saw Heath bend forward to light the swinging lamp above the table. The young man quickly withdrew into the shadow; but after a time he peered again from behind the curtain, and the inner room being now fully lighted he saw a sight which completely entranced him, and from which he could not remove his eyes.

Immediately under the lamp, and midway between the two men, was a case or casket such as jewellers use, made of leather and lined with white satin. This, however, was old-fashioned in its shape, its leather was frayed and its satin soiled and discoloured by age. It was a large casket, and was evidently meant to contain a whole suite of jewels, tiara for the head, necklace, earrings, and bracelets. The latter were still in it, large diamonds deeply imbedded in thick strong gold bands. The tiara was also there, but the spaces for the necklace and earrings were empty. Holding his breath, and with his eyes almost starting from his head, Danby noticed, close by Heath's hands a small polished steel hammer, pincers, and other tools. In front of him lay some gold work, twisted and broken, and in his hand was a paper full of gleaming stones, which he held up to the light and surveyed with eagerness.

"They are superb!" he muttered, as having breathed on them he watched the breath fade instantly away. "Old Stuyvesant must take the strap right off that black leather pocket-book, before he has any of these beauties. And they ought to be worth much," he said, in a still lower tone; "for they were trouble enough to get!"

He moved aside as he spoke, and Danby saw clearly, for the first time, the open case in which the tiara and the bracelets still remained. Surely, these ornaments were familiar to him? Surely he had seen them before—and recently? Meanwhile the captain had taken the jewel-case into his hands.

"You can't get these stones out, I suppose?" he asked.

"No," said Heath; "they are too firmly fixed in the gold, and the gold itself is so solid that it defies any effort I can make with these toy tools. However, you will have quite enough with you for one bargain, and if the old man bites, you or I can easily visit him again. What's that?" he cried abruptly, turning towards the middle door.

"Nothing!" said Studley, looking up and shading his eyes with his hand, "the cat, I suppose. The stores we have put in there have attracted mice, and the cat is always on the watch there now."

The noise, however, had really been occasioned by Walter Danby. A flash of memory had suddenly recalled to him when and where he had seen the jewels and the case then in Studley's hands. They were the very jewels which had been brought to Middleham's bank by the Spanish émigré countess some three months before, the very jewels for which he had given a receipt at Heath's order, had catalogued and deposited in the strong room. As he thought of this, a nervous tremor ran through him, and he knocked down a glass which was on a shelf by his elbow.

The jewels which had been stolen from Middleham's bank, for which the hue and cry had been raised, for which the detectives were in search, for which—ah! great Heavens, the agony of the thought—for which the murderer had been committed, by whom there was now little doubt! And one of these two men was *her* father! Stunned and dazed, Walter Danby closed his eyes, and pressed his hands to his throbbing temples, utterly uncertain what to do.

Where was Anne Studley the while?

She had not gone to Mrs. Wells's; she was standing outside the front gate of the garden, waiting for her lover; waiting to hear those first words of spoken love, the mere anticipation of which set her heart palpitating in her breast.

### PENAL LEGISLATION.

THE sinfulness of little sins has perhaps never been more cogently enforced than by Draco's famous recipe. If small offences deserve death, and no greater penalty can be exacted for the highest, we naturally arrive at a system of unsparing and uniform severity. The common instinct of humanity has indeed protected mankind from such sweeping retribution. But the same spirit which finds an utterance in the harsh Draconic maxim, coloured the whole theory of Oriental administrators of the law. Eastern justice has always aimed, so to speak, at picturesque effects. There is something impressive in the idea of the solitary despot of Babylon or Assyria, decreeing, amidst his carved and gilded halls, the banishment of a nation, the extermination of a tribe, or that the site of some many-towered city should be sown with salt. Punishment, in its most hideous forms of death, mutilation, or slavery, was apt to be spread over a wide area, and to involve in similar ruin all who were akin to the culprit. It was on a clan, more often than on an individual, that the wrath of the Great King fell.

Nothing could be more alien to the genius of the Greek nation than judicial slaughter. That lively, witty, and critical race, to whose minds the thought of death was irksome, turned with disgust from the gloomy ferocity of the Eastern world. A Greek was not cruel, either by nature or on principle; and pirate, slaveholder, or mercenary soldier as he might be, was no wanton blood-shedder. Parricide and sacrilege, crimes peculiarly hateful to the Hellenes, would indeed provoke an outburst of superstitious fury; but as a rule, exile, or in extreme cases the painless death by a draught of hemlock, suited better with the public taste as a chastisement for offenders. Carthage, on the other hand, had an evil repute for capricious barbarity, while the stern spirit of the Roman law presently overshadowed Europe. From the first that law, probably drawing its inspiration from Etruscan sources, had been rigid and austere. From the first, too,

it had been eminently unequal, pushing, as it did, the prerogatives of age, sex, and citizenship to the extreme possible limit. A Roman patrician of the early days of the Republic had certainly more authority, social and domestic, than was wholesome for himself or others. He might strike dead the son who displeased him. He might, more leniently, sell him into bondage, and in point of fact, a mock sale, followed by a formal manumission, was the only legal fiction whereby the young man could gain his independence. His wife, like his children, was under his paternal sway, and in the law's regard was in a state of perpetual minority.

As time went on, and wealth and luxury increased, some of the roughest asperities of Roman jurisprudence were smoothed away. A son's dependence on his father, a wife's subjection to her husband, grew less absolute. The wealthy money-lending noble could not grind the plebeians as of old. He had no longer under his banqueting-hall a subterranean Marshalsea or Fleet prison, where scores of groaning debtors, with their wives and children, were cooped up at the disposal of the lordly creditor who was their jailer-in-chief. It was safer and easier now to keep on good terms with the mob of the marketplace and with the well-endowed matron, mistress, by contract, of the dowry that she had brought in marriage. But then a very large proportion of those within and around the Seven-Hilled City were as completely cut off from the benefits and immunities of Roman law, as if they had been the as yet unconquered barbarians of Thule or Ethiopia. Rome was a close corporation, hard of access, and jealous of privilege; and Roman justice was a two-faced goddess, with a genial smile for the citizen and a relentless visage turned towards the non-sharers in the rights which citizenship bestowed.

Brawling, discontented Cainus, lounging, in his ragged toga, beneath the portico of the great public bath, and sneering at the gay chariot and Medish finery of some newly-enriched favourite who was a freedman but yesterday, was not so very ill off under the system of later Rome. As a citizen, he had his dole of bread, his seat in the amphitheatre, his personal liberty. He could not, now, be pressed as a soldier. He could not, now, be put to the torture by the noble neighbour who had lent him a handful of sesterces. Some senator or other would occasionally, at election times,

bid him welcome to dainty meats and rich wines, and he might, once and again, be entertained at the cost of Caesar himself. He was not a very useful member of society, it is true, since he had forgotten how to work or to fight, but he knew his station and the rights that it conferred. The law was indulgent to him, did he but keep clear of rebellion against the S. P. Q. R. and the deified emperor who acted as august wire-puller of that plausible mechanism. At worst, he could but die by a sharp sword-stroke, his citizenship serving for an *egis* even on the place of execution, as was approved by the exceptional martyrdom of St. Paul.

Very different was the lot of those swarming slaves, of all countries and colours, who tilled the lands of the Campagna about Rome, or who toiled in Umbrian mines, or on the plantations of the Basiliote or Sicily. Strict discipline was probably needed to maintain order amidst this motley throng, mainly composed of prisoners of war, the captive Briton plying his hoe beside a dusky savage from the Libyan deserts, or the slender supple Greek sharing the labours of some scarred warrior taken on a German battlefield. The freedmen who acted as overseers of the gang, and who with curses and cracking of whips kept the sullen, the sick, and the indolent to their work, had enough to do. Slaves who were unusually troublesome were chained in the mill, and revolt, flight, or pilfering were ruthlessly punished by the nearest magistrate. It was by the unsparing use of the scourge, the branding iron, the gibbet, and the cross, that the subjection of the vast servile population was maintained. No infliction was too severe, in the eyes of the haughty Roman, for a slave, a barbarian, or even one of those provincials who clung to the hem of Rome's garment. There was something contemptuous, always, in the cold cruelty of the masters of the world. The poor wretches, Christian or heathen, whom Nero sawed asunder or tossed to the lions, the victims of Domitian's or Caligula's crazy caprice, were not citizens. The stocks, the yoke, the lash, were kept for foreigners, or for those who, generation after generation, had continued to be regarded merely as chattels of flesh and blood.

We owe to Tacitus an accurate knowledge of the mild spirit which, as compared to the Roman code, distinguished the laws of ancient Germany. Goths and Suevi

and Franks, hardy and warlike as they were, had a respect for the sanctity of human life which was undreamed of by their more civilised opponents. With them all crimes could be atoned for by a money-payment, and a graduated scale of fines was provided for every imaginable offence. No doubt servitude or outlawry awaited him whose purse could not expiate the wrong that he had done, but the dislike to the infliction of capital punishment was deeply rooted in the character of the cluster of nations which then inhabited the darkling forests of Central Europe. Throughout Scandinavia there was the same rule of a cash payment for injury, and in England the "bot" or "wergild" was regularly assessed, even in cases of murder, unequally, it is true, inasmuch as harm done to persons of inferior rank was lightly taxed, but with a persistency which showed an aversion to the deliberate infliction of death, pain, or mutilation. Our rugged ancestors had almost in practice anticipated the principles of the extreme school of modern philanthropists.

With the arrival of the Normans, and still more of the Angevin kings who succeeded William and his sons, a new system came in. The Conqueror had indeed a strong dislike to death punishments, but both he and his successor Rufus must bear the reproach of the wanton and horrible mutilations which they persistently inflicted on rebel, robber, and poacher. Pounding in mortars, putting out of eyes, lopping of hands, continued to be only too common in England until the accession of Henry the Third, about which time the Great Charter began to bear some fruit, and a certain check was imposed on arbitrary cruelty. Compared with Continental countries England was, under the Plantagenet, Tudor, and Stuart reigns, gently governed. Hanging, it is true, was too frequent to attract much notice, although there may be doubts as to the probability of seventy thousand executions for theft during the single reign of Henry the Eighth, and out of a sparse population of five millions. The beadle's whip and the ducking-stool were often in request, and offenders were branded with a hot iron, and ears nailed to the pillory, by judicial sentence. But no corporation records of an English town preserve grisly entries, as in France, of sums paid to the executioner for pouring molten lead or boiling oil into the veins of a malefactor; nor were the ghastly torments inflicted on Ravaillac,

the assassin of Henry the Fourth of France, ever paralleled amongst us.

Somewhat of the old fair-dealing spirit of our forefathers survived to forbid, even under the French-speaking dynasties of the two hundred years that followed the Conquest, the use of torture to extract confession from a suspected criminal. Such a method prevailed in Scotland, where boot and thumbscrew flourished at the close of the seventeenth century. But then Scotland, like Gaul and part of Germany, had accepted the Roman law, by which this convenient expedient for eliciting admissions, true or false, was recognised. Abroad, its employment was all but universal, and in much milder and later days a French, Italian, or Flemish magistrate would have failed to comprehend the scruples that debarred our insular justice from resorting to strong measures for wringing the truth out of our jail-birds. But although the judges of England were removable at the royal pleasure, they consistently, and at the risk of offending the king's highness, pronounced torture to be forbidden by the laws of England. In times of trouble, certainly, a king like Henry the Eighth or James the First might stretch an obstinate prisoner on the rack, or enclose him in the iron grip of the Scavenger's Daughter, but always for state purposes, and always as an irregularity which the nation condoned, but did not approve. The well-known punishment of the *peine forte et dure*, barbarous as it was, differed from all applications of torture to extort confession, inasmuch as it was meant to compel a sullen prisoner, who could not otherwise be legally tried, to plead at bar.

The dreadfully severe sentences passed by the various parliaments exercising local jurisdiction in France often seem, when we peruse their records, quite out of proportion to the offence. Not only sorcery, but some other acts which we should now qualify as misdemeanours, entailed the penalty of burning alive. In 1727, a Parisian lacquey who, with a fellow-servant, had lain in wait for, and beaten, a hackney-coachman, was broken on the wheel in the Place du Grève. A gentleman, who had threatened to strike another with his cane, atoned for the empty threat by three years of prison. In the same year a Catalan highwayman, one Jacques de la Pire, who seems to have levied toll on both sides of the Pyrenees, but against whom no graver charge than that of robbery was brought, was torn with red-hot

pincers as a preliminary to being broken on the wheel. Boiling alive, and the strappado, were, like the *Auto da Fé* itself, of Spanish invention.

There was, certainly, a tendency in England to do more evenhanded justice than was the case beyond the seas. In France, Flanders, and Germany, every man of noble blood, even to the neediest of the untitled gentry from Gascony or Suabia, could claim honourable death by block and axe. When the Regent Philip of Orleans caused a cadet of the princely family of Horn to be broken on the wheel, for the notorious robbery and murder of the Jew broker in the Rue Quincampoix, the sentence was regarded as an insult to the nobility of Europe. In England, although a peer of the realm had a technical right to be beheaded, he was, in practice, occasionally hanged; while junior scions of aristocracy, knights, squires, and bishops, were condemned without scruple to simple strangulation. Louis the Superb, in the fulness of his unbridled power, would have shrunk from sending the poorest chevalier to the gallows where vulgar offenders perished by wholesale; and prisoners in the Bastille were feasted, decently maintained, or kept in a miserable state of cold and hunger, according to their rank. There was, however, one gross blot in our judicial system, and this was the frequency with which, for coining, homicide, theft, or harbouring the king's rebels, women were burned at Tyburn or elsewhere, while their male accomplices received the milder doom of a halter. A great number of reputed witches also were consigned to the flames; but then it is hard for a generation that has outgrown the nursery terrors of beldams and broomsticks, to realise the agony of anger and alarm with which our ancestors regarded those who dabbled in the Black Art. And in cases of crime not tainted with the suspicion of sorcery, the formal sentence was often tempered by a rough kind of mercy, as when the executioner strangled the patient before applying a torch to the wood pile.

One practical effect of that English habit of leaving a large latitude to the judge, which has always been one of the marked features of English jurisprudence, was (and is) the great uncertainty which prevailed as to the apportionment of punishment. The law, once upon a time, decreed death for all grand larceny, or theft of any value over one shil-

ling—robbery from the person coming under another category, as when, a hundred years ago, John Strong was executed at Debtor's Door for stealing, with violence, one sixpence and a farthing from Edward Adams. There were then said to be eighty-six or seven capital offences on the pages of the statute book, and some philosophical astonishment has been expressed that any of King George's subjects should have died otherwise than by hemp. It frequently happened, however, that the ermined man of justice, after passing sentence of death, quietly wrote on his notes, "to be imprisoned for twelve months," or "transport to the colonies," and the commutation followed as a matter of course. It is, indeed, recorded of the amiable Lord Kenyon, that he was greatly shocked at seeing a young woman, whom he had just doomed to die, fall into convulsions of terror, and that with the black cap still on his head, he implored the officers of the court to "explain that he did not mean to hurt her," for passing a bad shilling. But there was no security that a judge, in some passing mood of ill temper, or suffering under the physical irritability very usual in those days of gout and port wine, might not act up to the letter of the law, and send half a dozen poor creatures to the gallows before a petition could reach the distant home secretary.

The great error into which both Asiatic and European legislators have habitually fallen, has been that of relying too much upon extreme severity for the repression of crime. Lawgivers have seldom taken into account the strange elasticity of the human nature with which they had to deal; or realised the truth that excessive harshness fails, after a time, even to terrify—as if fear, like other emotions, became dull and blunted by over-much use. In comparatively recent times we have had a notable proof of this in the sad chronicles of Norfolk Island, where despair and misery made the reckless prisoners do their worst, by taunts and imprecations, to provoke the sentries to execute their menace of firing through the bars, and where punishment was thrown away on the savage stoics who had outlived at once hope and apprehension. We know, too, how the judicious kindness of a humane governor tamed the stubborn souls of these ferocious outcasts, and what wonderful reformation was wrought amidst such thoroughly unpromising material.

If sabre and bowstring, impalement,

burying alive, or blowing from the muzzle of cannon would put an end to crime, then the khans, shahs, and sultans of the East would long ago have succeeded in making their turbaned millions virtuous by firman and fetwa. The knout in Russia, the Persian bastinado, and the subtleties of Tartar proficients in the art of giving pain, have failed to extirpate the deathless crop of offences against law. In China, Siam, and Japan much perverted ingenuity has been expended in devising penalties exceptionally appalling; but, fortunately, there is a limit to the sensitiveness of the throbbing nerves and quivering flesh; and arbitrary power struggles in vain against the fatalistic apathy which is a marked characteristic of the widely-spread Mongolian race. Almost the climax of absurdity, in pressing the argument of those who advocate severe punishments, is reached when we find it easy in China to hire a substitute ready to undergo any penalty, even death, in the place of a criminal who can afford the luxury of vicarious suffering. Poor Chang knows that the cangue, and the scourge, and the dungeon, constitute an ugly perspective, and he is no more desirous than are other people of receiving the stroke of the sharp sword-knife across that supple neck of his. But he cannot resist the offer of the money that buys him, as a sheep is bought. He spends, by anticipation, every grain of silver in the bag of glittering dollars that is the makeweight for his poor life, but not selfishly, according to the ethics of the Flowery Land. Those ten taels are Lil's dowry. The tailor who is to marry her asks more, it is true, but a little haggling will close the bargain. Then, when the daughter is established in a respectable position, it is time to think of clever young Ching, the pig-tailed Hopeful of the house. A sharp lad Ching, who can recite already a good deal of poetry, and who paints the neatest verses on every scrap of tinted paper that he can beg or steal. It would be a thousand pities to apprentice so promising a youth to some beggarly barge captain or prosaic cobbler, in default of the thirty dollars for which the literate, his tutor, promises to turn him out a scholar and a budding mandarin. Then there are the joss-sticks, the incense, and red paper to burn at the tiny altar before the images of revered ancestors, who will be ennobled so soon as aspiring Ching wears the glass button and the peacock's feather of a graduate. Add to these a few opium-

smokes, some good dinners of shark's fin and sea slugs, an evening at the theatre, a treat of fireworks, a match at kite-flying, and Chang is ready to kneel, and bend his shaven head and passive throat for the sweep of the scimitar.

In Christendom, at least, the pains and penalties that lie in wait for transgressors have of late years lost much of their sharp edge. The great Revolutionary besom made short work, on the continent of Europe, of oubliette and hunger-hole, of rack and spiked collar. The guillotine itself has grown rusty and unserviceable in Italy and Belgium, and even in France is set up but seldom, and with growing reluctance. Nobody, for years past, has been knouted to death in regenerated Russia. The very galleys are not, save in Spain and Portugal, the picturesque Pandemonia that they were throughout Southern Europe within living memory. Public opinion is now so resolutely opposed to the needless infliction of physical pain, and so averse to bloodshed, that the rough-and-ready methods of old times no longer thin the ranks of the dangerous classes. On the other hand, it is probable that convicts find prison life more irksome than did the degraded jail-birds of a less enlightened age; while the proportion of undetected offenders has a tendency to lessen, year by year, as the lantern of publicity throws its light into the darkling nooks and corners of the social system. One reason for the severities of our forefathers was, that they scarcely knew what to do with an unhanged rogue. They had no Portland, no Millbank, with their dull, grey monotony of discipline and labour. Their prisons were slovenly dens, where the squalid inmates revelled or starved, according to the liberality or parsimony of friends without; whence escape was common; and where the fever, from which its cells was never free, was wont, as at the Black Assize of Oxford, to hold its own great jail-delivery, in spite of judge and sheriff, of tipstaff and turnkey.

#### THE OLD BANNER.

THE poor old banner! Give it here, I say!  
Though king and church are toppling to their fall;  
I saved it from the Roundheads any way,  
When black Long Marston made an end of all.  
Why could not Rupert keep his squadrons back?  
Unbreathed, they might have broken Cromwell's line,  
But scattered far on flying Leslie's track!  
Ah, stanch and true it stood, that troop of mine!

What boots it now, when every oak is down,  
And even the great seal ring my father gave  
Melted with all the rest to help the Crown;  
The old man willed it, speaking from his grave.

Thank God, that I have neither wife nor son  
To perish in the ruin we have wrought.  
Poor Katie! waiting till the game is won!  
Well, here's her flag, from its last battle brought!  
Her deft hands broidered it. Blood-stained and rent  
It hangs about the staff. Why, who could guess  
How gallantly to the gay breeze it bent  
All gold and glitter, when, amid the press  
Of shouting Cavaliers, I flung it forth,  
And Katie clapped her little hands to see  
How bravely the battalions of the North  
Around her banner marched to victory.  
To victory! the Ouse runs swol'n and red,  
Sullenly sweeping to the angry main,  
With the best blood of bonnie Yorkshire fed,  
For on her banks knights fell like Autumn grain.  
Well, life will scarce be long, or axe and block,  
Or starving 'mid the Frenchmen, which were best?  
Oh comrades, slain in fiery battle shock,  
I would my time were come to join your rest!  
So, to the vaults. I'll leave my flag in trust,  
To all our long line, wrapt in dreamless sleep.  
I shall not lie amid ancestral dust,  
Nor kin nor vassal live my rites to keep.  
And better so! I'll place my treasure close  
Beneath my father's blazoned coffin lid,  
And when, anon, the rebels sack our house,  
They'll miss, perchance, a prize so grimly hid.  
There's just one diamond left that clasps my plume,  
Take it to my bright lady's feet, and tell,  
I leave her banner in my father's tomb,  
I leave my heart to her, and so, farewell.  
Whether to die 'mid clashing bow and bill,  
Or rot in prison, like some noisome thing,  
Or make my last short shrift on Tower Hill:  
Who knows, who cares? Not I! God save the king!

#### EARLY EASTERN TRAVELLERS.

MANDEVILLE.

INASMUCH as Sir John Mandeville—albeit, not excessively scrupulous as to his facts—exhibits a tincture of science from which other mediæval travellers are remarkably free, it may be well, before following the worthy knight on his wanderings, to put ourselves in the place of an Early Eastern Traveller, by recalling, as clearly as may be, the idea of configuration of the earth which was accepted as accurate in his day. In the year of grace, 1874, it may be affirmed that any average child of twelve years of age, who has been to school at all, has clearer ideas of the solar system than the hardy voyagers who, in quest of pleasure or profit, traversed the Mediterranean in the middle ages. The idea of the earth as a mere satellite of the sun had, it is true, occurred to Pythagoras, as forming part of a Cosmic universe, in which planets revolve around a central fire, or sun; and the sphericity of our world had been taught by Thales of Miletus, and, at a later date, by Aristotle and his followers, until what is called the Ptolemaic system was generally accepted by geographers. This scheme of the universe flattered the vanity

of mankind, by making the earth the centre, around which revolved the sun, moon, and planets. Towards the sixth century, however, the sphericity of the earth fell into disfavour, and, in the general darkness which shrouded the human mind from the fifth to the twelfth century, the theory originally propounded by Xenophanes—that the earth is a high mountain, with stars floating round its summit, was very generally accepted. Sunrise and sunset were explained by the enormous elevation of the centre of the world, which was supposed to cut off the rays of the revolving sun. The evident convexity of surface was ascribed to the lower position of the warmer countries, and this hypothesis was supported by the bold assertion that the rivers which ran southward were infinitely more rapid in their course than those which—owing to trifling inequalities of surface—ran in the opposite direction. Far away to the north, beyond the country of the Hyperboreans and Paradise itself, was the land of Darkness and perpetual night, wherein no man might abide; while to the south lay a fiery tract equally uninhabitable by human beings. Stated roughly, then, the mediæval world was a huge mass—square or round—deflecting somewhat to the south, and consisting of the ancient Roman Empire, the empire of Alexander, the realms of the unconquered Scythians, and India. This world was surrounded by the ocean, beyond which lay, according to Cosmas Indicopleustes, the regions inhabited by men before the flood.

This same Cosmas, who died about 550 A.D., may be fairly considered the best and clearest exponent of the astronomy and geography of the dark ages. In early life a merchant, trading from Alexandria to India, he probably saw a great deal of the world, and becoming in later life a monk at Alexandria, he penned the famous volume which bears his name. His work is of a distinctly controversial character, having been written to confute those philosophers who wickedly persisted in reasserting the doctrines of ancient pagans, who had declared the earth to be a sphere, and insisted on the existence of antipodes. With that intense bitterness which is even more conspicuous in scientific than in theological controversy, Cosmas pulverises his adversaries by argument and sarcasm, and, after going to the length of making a picture of four men, trying to

stand on a globe, about a foot in diameter, dismisses the antipodists with immeasurable contempt. He then proceeds to show that inasmuch as of the four elements—earth, water, air, and fire—earth is by far the heaviest, the earth must naturally be the centre and base of the universe, for “if there were anything beyond the earth it would naturally fall.” The earth is therefore pictured as an oblong mountain, around which, at a considerable distance below the summit, the sun performs its daily revolution—the portion of the hill above the sun being the land of darkness. The base of the vast elevation is washed by the circumambient ocean, of which the known seas were supposed—accurately except in the case of the Caspian—to be inlets or gulfs. At the extremity of ocean, “the inferior parts of heaven descend upon it and the upper part is a vault.”

This scheme of the universe looks very well in elevation, or section, but when reduced to a ground plan or map produces the oddest effect. The earliest mediæval map of the world presents many extraordinary features. It is oblong in form, being longest from east to west. Around the four sides of the parallelogram is a broad margin occupied by the ocean, which in four places penetrates far into the terrestrial portion. These inlets are the Sinus Romanus or Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Caspian Sea. As there were four elements and four gulfs, so also were there four great rivers rising in the terrestrial paradise, a region depicted in a sort of supplementary parallelogram beyond the ocean to the eastward. These rivers were supposed to flow under the ocean, and to reappear in the known world at indeterminate spots. On the north side of the parallelogram, is the “transoceanic land inhabited by man before the flood,” and on the southern side is a similar tract, simply designated “terra ultra oceanum.”

This theory of rivers lasted, with slight modifications, to Mandeville’s time, and is thus set forth by that worthy knight: “Of Paradise I cannot speak properly, for I was not there. It is far beyond (the realms of Prester John), and I repent not going there, but I was not worthy. But as I have heard say of wise men beyond, I shall tell you with good will. Terrestrial Paradise, as wise men say, is the highest place of the earth; and it is so high that it nearly touches the circle of the moon there,

as the moon makes her turn ; for it is so high that the flood of Noah might not come to it, that would have covered all the earth of the world all about, and above and beneath except Paradise. And this Paradise is enclosed all about with a wall, and men know not whereof it is ; for the wall is covered all over with moss as it seems ; and it seems not that the wall is natural stone. And that wall stretches from the south to the north, and it has but one entry, which is closed with burning fire, so that no man that is mortal dare enter. And in the highest place of Paradise, exactly in the middle, is a well that casts out the four streams which run by divers lands, of which the first is called Pison or Ganges, that runs throughout India. And the other is called Nile or Gyson, which goes through Ethiopia, and after through Egypt, and the other is called Tigris, which runs by Assyria, and by Armenia the Great ; and the other is called Euphrates, which runs through Media, Armenia, and Persia. And men there beyond say that all the sweet waters of the world, above and beneath, take their beginning from the well of Paradise, and out of that well all waters come and go."

It is worthy of remark, that, between the time of Cosmas and that of Mandeville, the position of the terrestrial paradise had shifted somewhat. It was still held to be in the East, but was no longer beyond ocean, and the rivers flowed downwards from a high place instead of tunnelling under the ocean, "for," says the knight, "many great lords have assayed with great will many times to pass those rivers towards Paradise with full great companies ; but they might not speed in their voyage ; and many died for weariness of rowing against the strong waves ; and many of them became blind and many deaf, for the noise of the water, and some perished and were lost in the waves." The terrestrial paradise, indeed, presented enormous difficulties to mediæval geographers. At times it appears to have been located in Central Asia ; occasionally it occupies Central Africa ; and always presents the awkward problem of a watershed from which flowed not only the Tigris, Euphrates, and Ganges, rivers bending southwards, but the Nile, which flowed northward from that portion of the earth which was assumed to lie lowest down. Apart, however, from the location of the terrestrial paradise and the difficulty

of reconciling the theory of four rivers with the facts of geography, mediæval map-makers appear to have done well according to their lights, for—puerile as their conceptions may appear to any young gentleman of the nineteenth century, who has struggled successfully through an examination in astronomy and physical geography—it may yet be well to reflect for a moment whether mediæval cartographers were not truly philosophical, in reasoning from the facts already observed by travellers. The size and shape of the earth were necessarily unknown to the ancients, and, as increased knowledge dawned upon the nations, the world only became known bit by bit. Centuries elapsed before the Caspian was recognised as a lake, and ages passed away before China and India were discovered. This truth, that ancient geographers reasoned fairly from the facts before them, was vividly impressed upon me on meeting with Sir John Mandeville's astounding statement that the city of Jerusalem is, and must be, the centre of the world. At the first glance Jerusalem appears the most unlikely spot in the world to select as a central point, and I was inclined to refer the belief as to its central position as due, rather to the fervid faith, than to the geographical knowledge of the author, who was yet a skilled physician and eminent natural philosopher of his day. It occurred, however, to me that it would not be unbecoming in a philosopher of these days to make an experiment, and test the at first sight amazing assertion of a traveller who saw men and cities and wrote an account of them five hundred years ago. I accordingly took a pair of compasses, and making Jerusalem my centre and Iceland my radius, described a circle, and found that it included the whole of the then known world—the immense extension of Asia to the eastward, described by Marco Polo, not being at that time generally credited. I found that within the circle were Europe, North-East Africa nearly as far south as the Sources of the Nile, Arabia, Persia, India as far as the Punjab—the limit of Alexander's victories—Asia Minor, Armenia, Afghanistan, and the vast tract of Asia extending from the Himalayas to the mouth of the Obi. I thus got an almost exact reproduction on a modern map of the celebrated *Mappa Mundi* drawn by Marino Sanuto in the year of grace 1320, and preserved in the library at Paris.

This slight shock to scientific self-

sufficiency prepared me for a second and more careful study of the "Voiage and Travaile of Sir John Maundevile, Knight."

In the first quarter of the fourteenth century the spirit of the middle ages fairly melted into another train of thought. One of the "first men of the century" was Sir John Mandeville, knight, of St. Albans, physician, philosopher, and soldier. He commenced the travels which have immortalised his name at a noteworthy period. Joinville and Marco Polo, representatives of the military and commercial schools of travellers, were just dead, as Mandeville, a wandering free lance with a scientific turn—an educated Dugald Dalgetty—started on a tour which lasted for three-and-thirty years. A fervent Christian and a pilgrim to the Holy Sepulchre, then in Saracenic hands, Mandeville was yet a thorough soldier of fortune, and served the Soldan of Babylon (Cairo) so well, that this powerful ruler offered to marry the English knight to a Paynim princess if he would only forswear his country and his faith. Throughout his narrative are indications of that revival of learning, and of that spirit of scientific investigation, which signalled that remarkable period of transition during which Petrarch perfected the sonnet, Boccacio taught the world how to tell a story, Chaucer produced the first important poem, and Mandeville himself wrote the first prose volume in the English language.

Like the French of Ville-Hardouin the English of Mandeville is puzzling to the modern reader, and a habit the good knight had of spelling the same word in half-a-dozen different ways adds to the embarrassment. In clerkship, however, the English knight was far in advance of his French predecessors. He wrote his book in three languages, in Latin, in French, and in English, and states in the French version, which was apparently the first written, "I would have put this book into Latin to devise more briefly; but as many understand French better than Latin, I have written it in Romant in order that any one may understand it, and the lords, knights, and others who comprehend not Latin." It is said that the copy presented to Edward the Third was in French, and it is by no means clear that the English version was written by the hand of Mandeville himself, but there is no doubt that all three versions became extremely popular within a few years after their publication, from

the many copies yet extant among collections of manuscripts. Popular as was the work of Sir John Mandeville during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, very little is known of the author himself. The year of his birth is not exactly known, and the time of his death is variously placed from 1371 to 1382, although the place of his decease was undoubtedly Liège. His own book throws little light on his career. Beyond the incidental mention of his serving in the army of the Soldan of Babylon, whom he appears to have forsaken about 1341, and a subsequent allusion to his having seen part of India, and to his having served for a short space the Grand Khan, the knight leaves us absolutely in the dark as to what he did, beyond performing the pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. If we assume him to have started in 1322, the earliest date assigned, an interval of thirteen years elapses between his departure from Cairo and his return to England. What was he about all this time in the Indian Seas? He appears to have visited the court of the Great Khan of the Mongols, for he says distinctly, when speaking of the mechanical peacocks at the Great Khan's table, who "danced, sang, and clapped their wings together," that he busied himself "to learn the craft" of making them; when the master excused himself on the plea that he had "made a vow to his god to teach it no creature but only to his eldest son." This anecdote seems to indicate that Mandeville was a man of some consequence at the Mongol court; albeit his evident borrowings from Marco Polo encourage a belief that he was never there at all, but compiled his account of the Tartars, like many of his other narratives, from older and well-known authors. His book, indeed, is altogether a curious composition. Professing to be an itinerary of the Holy Land, it is a huge compound of what he saw and what he heard; and, although he occasionally prefaces an unusually tough story with "they say," he gives his personal authority to many astounding stories, and mixes his actual and "hearsay" evidence together in a way at once amusing and perplexing. Throughout his book there is, however, an obvious desire to "efface himself." Whether this arose from a Christian humility entirely absent in other travellers, or from a wish to conceal the particulars of a "shady" career, must for ever

remain unknown. All that we know from the knight himself is that at his coming home he went to Rome "and showed my life to our Holy Father the Pope, and was absolved of all that lay in my conscience of many divers grievous points, as men must need that are in company, dwelling amongst so many divers people, of divers sects and beliefs as I have been. And, amongst all, I showed him this treatise that I had made after information of men that knew of things that I had not seen myself, as far as God would give me grace; and besought his holy fatherhood that my book might be examined and corrected by advice of his wise and discreet council."

Mandeville's book was compared with another, by which the "Mappa Mundi" (probably Sanuto's) was made, and received the full approbation of the Holy See; whereupon he lied him northwards, coming home "in spite of myself, to rest, for rheumatic gouts that distress me and fix the end of my labour against my will (God knoweth). And thus taking comfort in my wretched rest recording the time passed, I have fulfilled these things and written them in this book, as it would come into my mind, the year of grace 1356 in the thirty-fourth year that I departed from our country. Wherefore I pray to all the readers and hearers of this book, if it please them, that they would pray to God for me, and I shall pray for them."

One of the most remarkable features of this singular work is the evidence it affords of a great advance in geographical knowledge since the period of the first crusade. Mandeville devotes the whole of a highly-interesting chapter to an attempt to prove the earth a sphere, and the existence of antipodes not only possible but in the highest degree probable. From a scientific point of view this chapter is worth all the rest of the book put together, as it affords evidence that during his long sojourn at Cairo he had become indoctrinated with the systems of Arab geographers. In the beginning, these also, like their western rivals, believed the earth to be entirely flat, but beyond the circumambient ocean placed a mysterious range of mountains. It is, however, well known that the speculations of ancient Greek philosophers were filtered through Arabic manuscripts into the learning of the later middle ages; and it is therefore probable that Mandeville acquired some of the remarkable opinions, expressed by

him in his seventeenth chapter, from an Arabic source. The doctrine that the earth is a sphere had succumbed to the arguments of Cosmas, and was generally discredited throughout the western world; but, nevertheless, Mandeville advances numerous arguments, some of which are apparently so far ahead of his age, as to excite both astonishment and admiration in the modern reader. Contrary to all practice, he advances (on this occasion) physical proof of his theory. When speaking of the island of Lamary, in the Indian Ocean, he says:—"Neither in that land, nor in many others beyond it, may any man see the Polar star, which is called the star of the sea, which is immovable and is towards the north, and which we call the load star. But they see another star opposite to it towards the south, which they call Antarctic. And right as shipmen here govern themselves by the load star, so shipmen beyond those parts are guided by the Star of the South, which appears not unto us. . . For which cause we may clearly perceive that the land and sea are of round shape and form, because the part of the firmament appears in one country which is not seen in another country. And men may prove by experience and their understanding that if a man found passages by ships, he might go by ship all round the world, above and beneath; which I prove thus after what I have seen." Here follow several measurements, taken with the astrolabe, of the height of the Polar Star and others of the Antarctic, whence Mandeville concludes "that these two stars are fixed, and about them all the firmament turns as a wheel that turns on its axle-tree; so that those stars bear the firmament in two equal parts; so that it has as much above as it has beneath. After this I have gone towards the south, and if I had had company and shipping to go further I believe that we should have seen all the roundness of the firmament all about." Calculating his measurements of the Polar Star and the Antarctic, and the proportion of the firmament he had seen, he continues:—"I tell you, certainly, that men may go all round the world, as well under as above, and return to their country, if they had company and shipping and guides; and always they would find men, lands, and isles, as well as in our part of the world. For they who are towards the Antarctic are directly opposite of them who dwell under the Polar Star as well as we, and they that

dwell under us are feet opposite feet. For all parts of the sea and land have their opposites habitable or passable."

Pondering over this remarkable chapter, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Mandeville has been done scant justice to by posterity. His popular reputation is that of a teller of old wife's tales, and yet we find him, more than a century before Columbus, demonstrating the spherical form of the earth and the possibility of circumnavigating it.

The great body of Mandeville's book is filled with accounts of distant countries, strangely mixed with the fables recounted by ancient historians and monkish chroniclers.

On visiting Cyprus he records a curious version of a story in the Decameron, and describes a custom of hunting with "papyons," described by some commentators as "large wild dogs;" but as Mandeville says they resemble leopards, there can be little doubt that the practice of hunting with the "cheetah" had, in the middle ages, penetrated as far west as Cyprus. At Joppa or Jaffa were many wonders, among which "may still be seen the place where the iron chains were fastened with which Andromeda—a great giant!—was bound and put in prison before Noah's flood; a rib of whose side, which is forty feet long, is still shown." Mandeville is profuse in his description of the Holy Land, where he probably abode for a while, but is more to be relied on, so far as he confines himself to what he saw, when he speaks of Egypt. Curiously confounding the modern Babylon (Cairo) with the ancient city of that name, he fails not to recount the history of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and then, immediately after, proceeds to describe the actual residence of the sultan under whom he served for many years: "The sultan dwells in his Calahelyke in a fair castle, strong and great, and well set upon a rock. In that castle dwell always, to keep it and serve the sultan, more than six thousand persons, who receive here all necessaries from the sultan's court. I ought to know it well, for I dwelt a great while with him as soldier in his wars against the Bedouins; and he would have married me full highly to a great prince's daughter if I would have forsaken my law and my belief. But I thank God that I had no will to do it for anything that he promised me."

In his next mention of Babylon he dis-

tinguishes clearly between the ancient city and Cairo, for saith he, "you must understand that the Babylon whereof I have spoken, where the sultan dwells, is not that great Babylon where the confusion of languages was first made by the miracle of God, when the great Tower of Babel was begun, of which the walls were sixty-four furlongs high; for that is in the deserts of Arabia, on the way as men go towards the kingdom of Chaldea. But it is full long since any man dare approach to the tower, for it is all desert and full of dragons and great serpents, and infested by divers venomous beasts."

In the fashion customary to mediæval travellers he calls the pyramids the barns or granaries of Joseph, following therein the Saracen traditions, and gives a full account of the river Gyson (Nile) and its overflow, and continues, "this river comes from terrestrial paradise between the deserts of India; and after it descends on the earth, and runs through many extensive countries under the earth; and after it comes out under a high hill"—this corresponds closely with Joinville's account—"which they call Alothe, between India and Ethiopia, at a distance of five months' journey from the entrance of Ethiopia; and after it environs all Ethiopia and Mauritania, and goes all along from the land of Egypt to the city of Alexandria to the end of Egypt where it falls into the sea."

Mandeville now proceeds to depict the phoenix after the manner of Pliny; the apples of paradise, which "though you cut them in ever so many slices or parts, across or endwise, you always find in the middle the figure of the holy cross;" and the "apples of Adam, which have a bite on one side." At Bethlehem he finds the field Floridus, wherein a fair maiden who had been unjustly accused of wrong was doomed to be burned, and after praying devoutly "entered into the fire, and immediately the fire was extinguished, and the faggots that were burning became red rose-bushes, and those that were not kindled became white rose-bushes, full of roses. And these were the first rose trees and roses, both white and red, that ever any man saw." Of the Dead Sea he evidently speaks from hearsay, for "if a man cast iron therein it will float on the surface, and if a man cast a feather therein it will sink to the bottom;" but he adds, significantly, "these are things contrary to nature."

He also narrates the well-known story of the apples of the Dead Sea, and the

curious mediaeval legend of the knight who watched seven days by a certain sparrowhawk and then had his wish. India, where the mysterious Mandeville may or may not have been in the flesh, supplies many wonderful stories. On the way to India is the island Hermes (Ormuz), where there is a great heat, and also "ships without nails of iron or bonds, on account of the rocks of adamant (loadstone), for they are all abundant thereabout in the sea, that is marvellous to speak of; and if a ship passed there that had either iron bonds or iron nails it would perish; for the adamant by its nature draws iron to it; and so it would draw to it the ship, because of the iron, that it should never depart from it." This is one of the extraordinary mixtures of fable and fact in which early travellers take especial delight. The mountains of magnetic ore are the subject of traditions far older than the Arabian Nights; but the "sewed ships" which traded to Ormuz were plain matter-of-fact coasting vessels, which were sewed together, duly payed and caulked, merely on account of the scarcity of iron. Marco Polo gives a lengthy account of these ships, but is far too cautious to refer to magnetic mountains as the first cause of their peculiar manufacture. Another marvel is the Well of Youth, whereof Mandeville drank three or four times and says, forgetting for the moment his rheumatism, "Methinks I still fare the better." Shifting the venue to the island of Dondun, we are introduced to people of wicked ways: so that the father eats the son, the son the father, the husband the wife, and the wife the husband. Whether this arises from extreme affection or from a desire to "utilise waste products," is not set forth, but the customs of the African Fans justify Mandeville's narrative. He next describes the "men with heads beneath their shoulders," and "drags in by the hair" the Cyclops and the "people who go upon their hands and feet like beasts and are all skinned and feathered, and would leap as lightly into trees and from tree to tree as squirrels and apes." These are the veddahs of Ceylon, the aborigines who dwelt in trees and cured venison with honey; but in the next line is an account of people "who go always upon their knees, and have eight toes on every foot." Immediately after this astounding story is an account of trees that bear wool (cotton) "as though it were of a sheep, whereof men

make clothes and all things that may be made of wool." Prester John, whose realms are placed in India, is a Christian potentate living near the "gravelly sea," and near unto him is the Perilous Valley, wherein Mandeville says he went, and after descending upon the Devil's Head in this same valley, gives a capital account of cokernuts and "gerfauntz" (giraffes), which are spotted and a little higher than a horse, with a neck twenty cubits long, and the croup and tail are like those of a hart, and one of them may look over a high house." The porcupine is also well treated; but coal, so admirably described by Marco Polo, is transposed into "a manner of wood hard and strong; and whoever covers the coals of that wood under the ashes thereof the coals will remain alive a year and more." This strange jumble of truth and fiction is easily explained. Sir John Mandeville was a physician, philosopher, and soldier, but employed the common devices of book-making. Being a well-read man he not only availed himself of all the science then extant, but reinforced it with the fables told by ancient writers such as Pliny. No modern reader can peruse his wonderful book without regretting that he did not give more space to his personal adventures and less to difficult and laborious compilation. Had he only written the record of his own adventurous life he would have presented us with a wonderful picture of a mediaeval traveller, who combined the perceptive qualities of a physician with the acquisitive faculties of a free lance.

### ODD WOMEN.

WE cannot undertake to say whether there are more Odd Men or Odd Women in the world. The former, including the Odd Fellows, are certainly numerous; but the other sex can put in a pretty good claim.

There are, for instance, the women who, through some freak of nature, are compelled to work their way in life without the advantages which come to human beings generally. The blind, the deaf, the dumb, the idiot, are too mournful to be called odd; and the anecdotes referring to them are so well known that they need not be touched on here.

Come forth, Miss Biffin. This lady was born without arms and hands, towards the end of the last century; yet did she earn an honest living for herself, by means of her toes, and two little stumps

where arms ought to have been. She cut out paper-profiles, and painted miniatures, in an odd but most ingenious way, by the aid of stamps and toes. After exhibiting at Bartholomew and other fairs, she was employed by the Earl of Morton to paint his miniature; and the picture when finished was shown to George the Third. The monarch enabled her to receive further lessons in drawing and painting from Mr. Craig; and then she earned a livelihood for many years by the aid of pen and pencil, helped out by a small pension; she abandoned caravan life at fairs, and was semi-professional at her own house. She fell in love with somebody, or somebody with her, and married; but the world still knew her as Miss Biffin, and under this name she died about a quarter of a century ago. Another lady, who in early age exhibited for money, was Miss Hawlin, born so completely without arms that she had not even stumps, and was in that respect worse off than Miss Biffin. Dressed neatly, with powdered hair suitable to the days of old Queen Charlotte, she sat on a table, her naked feet visible beneath frilled trowsers; with her toes she managed to cut out watch-papers, grasping and working the scissors in some inexplicable way; and—still more remarkable—used needle and thread for sewing and stitching.

Bearded women are more odd than loveable; there have been some such to astonish the world. There was one Bartel Graetje, in the sixteenth century, of whom a portrait exists in the Stutgardt gallery, representing her as a young woman of about five-and-twenty, with a very large beard. Still more remarkable was Barbara Urslerin, the "hairy-faced woman of Augsburg," about forty years later. Her face and hands were hairy nearly all over—sadly like some species of monkey; the beard was almost as long and spreading as the hair of her head. This hirsute lady was not doomed to single-blessedness; for one Michael Vanbeck married her, and carried her about as a show. Two engraved portraits of her are extant, and there is no reason to doubt the veritability of the phenomenon.

What are we to say of pig-faced ladies? There have been claims for many; but the search for their authenticity seems to have been as uncertain as Mr. Thom's search for reliable evidence concerning the alleged age of Old Parr and Henry Jenkins. Country fairs frequently an-

nounce them; foreign populations believe in them; and many exciting stories are told concerning them. One narrative tells that a newly-married lady of rank and fortune, being annoyed by the importunities of a wretched beggar-woman, who was carrying a dirty squalling child, exclaimed, "Take away your nasty pig; I shall not give you anything." Whereupon the incensed beggar retorted, "May your own child, when it is born, be more like a pig than mine!" Alas! the lady's child came into the world with a pig's face; grew up to be a woman, beautiful in form all except the face, but hoggish in feeding and manners, and lived and died in a hospital founded and maintained by her wealthy parents. Equally veracious, we suppose, was the story of a Belgian gentleman who renounced the church and embraced Judaism; the first child born to him afterwards had a pig's face; but in later years, when the father recanted and the daughter was baptised, the face miraculously changed to human form. A third story is that of Janakin Skinker, born in Rhenish Holland in 1618, well proportioned in form else, but pig-faced, and having no other power of language than a grunt. She, or her parents, offered forty thousand pounds to any gentleman who would marry her; many gallants came, but one and all begged to decline when they had seen her. Unfortunately, two printed pamphlets exist, one in English, and the other in Dutch, each a counterpart of the other; but whereas in one she is said to have been born at Wickham on the Rhine, the other assigns Windsor on the Thames as her birthplace; and we may not unwisely disbelieve them both. A fourth story had its era sixty years ago, when a shilling pamphlet gave a portrait and account of a pig-faced lady, residing in style at the West end of London—beautiful in all respects except the facial peculiarity. Her female servant could not be persuaded to live and sleep with her even by the temptation of a thousand guineas a year. That this catch-penny or catch-shilling was really credited by some silly persons, we have evidence in two veritable advertisements. One, inserted in the Times of February the ninth, 1815, stated that "A young gentlewoman having heard of an advertisement for a person to take care of a lady who is heavily afflicted in the face, and whose friends have offered a handsome income yearly, and a premium for residing with her for seven years,

would do all in her power to render her life most comfortable. An undeniable character can be obtained from a respectable circle of friends. An answer to this advertisement is requested, as the advertiser will keep herself disengaged." The other, inserted in the *Morning Herald* on the sixteenth of the same month, is to the effect that "A single gentleman, aged thirty-one, of a respectable family, and in whom the utmost confidence may be reposed, is desirous of explaining his mind to the friends of a person who has a misfortune in her face, but is prevented for want of an introduction. Being perfectly aware of the principal particulars, and understanding that a final settlement would be preferred to a temporary one, presumes he would be found to answer the full extent of their wishes. His intentions are sincere, honorable, and firmly resolved. References of great respectability can be given." These two persons gave their addresses, the one in Judd-street, the other in Great Ormond-street, London.

Our pig-faced ladies are not even yet exhausted. Another narrative of the kind is of Dublin origin, and relates to a Miss Steevens, who was said to be pig-faced, somewhere in the early part of the present century. Her portrait and a silver trough, out of which she took her food, were announced for exhibition. Dublin believed the story for many years; but the believers believed on the faith of those who told them. The reader has undoubtedly the privilege of deciding for himself, whether or not to accept any of these stories. Meanwhile a heartless writer has revealed the fact that one, at least, of the pig-faced ladies exhibited at fairs was a bear, shaved, ringleted, and elegantly bonneted; tied upright in a large arm-chair, and having a shawl and skirt to conceal the body!

Among odd women may certainly be classed those who, in earlier years, were wild girls, found in a semi-barbarous state in woods and lonely districts. Peter the Wild Boy and Caspar Hauser have had parallels in the gentler sex, if the narratives are to be believed. In 1731, while a nobleman was shooting near Chalons, he saw two beings in a small lake or pond, who proved to be girls of (apparently) ten or twelve years of age. They were very dark, and had a scanty covering of rags and skins. One made her escape, and was not again seen; the other was secured, and taken to the château of the Vicomte

d'Epinay. She spoke no words, only a kind of wild scream; preferred raw meat and vegetables to cooked; her fingers and thumbs were very strong, owing to frequent climbing and clinging on trees. A shepherd, to whose care she was consigned, had much difficulty in retaining and taming her; for she would scratch holes in the walls and roof of his hut, and escape into the woods. When exhibited before the Queen of Poland, in 1737, she displayed her fleetness in outrunning hares and rabbits. She was baptised as Marie le Blanc, but did not live to do credit to her sponsors; her health declined under the influence of civilised usages, and she was sent to a convent, where she passed out of the world's ken. Another instance comes under date, 1767, where some Hungarians were chasing the wild boar near Frauenmark, and followed their prey far over the mountains. Seeing the tracks of human footsteps in the snow, they traced them to a cavern, where they found a young girl unclothed, and very brown in colour. She set up a cry, and gazed on the hunters, who took her away with them. They conveyed her to a hospital near Chemnitz, where she was clothed and made to take nourishment. At first she refused all the cooked food presented to her, preferring roots, inner bark, and other undressed articles of vegetable growth. What became of her we have no record to tell.

Some odd women have lived a life of loneliness, without furnishing anything like a rational explanation of the cause of their isolation. Such was the case of one Louisa, whose surname seems to have eluded enquiry. In the year 1776, a young and pretty woman made her appearance at Bourton, near Bristol, and solicited food. The inhabitants took an interest in her, and would have given her a home; but she would sleep nowhere save under a haystack. She said that trouble and misery dwell in houses; that there is no happiness but in liberty and fresh air. She had refined manners, a slightly foreign accent, and evidently experienced much mental distress, with occasionally a little wildness of demeanour. When ill, she would accept the aid of hospitals; but, when recovered, she returned to her haystack. During three or four years' residence in the neighbourhood she obtained little gifts of food from the villagers; but she neither sought nor would accept employment. She was known as the Lady of the Haystack, for something in her

manner prevented the villagers from regarding her as a common, vulgar person. Her peculiarities led to her temporary confinement in a private asylum near Bristol, from which she was transferred to Guy's Hospital, where she died early in the present century. Nothing was ascertained concerning her identity and history. It was only at incoherent moments that she made remarks which led to the inference that she had been married, had moved in good, if not high, society, and had suffered much ill-usage. The Book of Wonderful Characters gives many of her snatches of conversation; but as we do not know the source of information, and as they were inconclusive in their result, we pass them. Another local celebrity, in a somewhat similar position of isolation, but belonging to a humbler grade in life, was Jenny Darney, who lived alone in a hut lent to her in Cumberland. She picked up bits of wool that lay about the fields in sheep-farms, spun it on a spindle of her own making, and knitted the thread with wooden needles into garments for her own wear. She would accept money from no one, but received food from kind neighbours. She refused to give her name, mention her family, or assign a reason for her strange mode of life. Dates are wanting; all we learn is, that she died at an advanced age early in the present century.

Not so lonely as the mysterious Louisa of the haystack, or Jenny of the hut, but odd enough in her way, was Mrs. Lewson. She was left a wealthy widow in London in the time of George the First; and, rejecting all offers of re-marriage, passed the rest of her days at the residence of her late husband in Cold Bath Square. The house was large and handsomely furnished; and some of the beds were kept constantly made and in trim order, although they had not been slept in for thirty years. Her own room was occasionally swept out, but never washed, and the windows were so encrusted with dirt as to admit scarcely any light. She reasoned thus, when asked for an explanation: — If the room were wetted, she might catch cold; if the windows were cleaned the glass might be broken, and somebody hurt. She never washed herself, for fear of cold; as a substitute she anointed her face and neck with a little milk and hog's lard, finished off with a touch of rose pink on the cheeks. She was methodical in all her habits, eating with one favourite knife,

fork, and plate, and drinking out of one cup. She had excellent health, abhorred physic and doctors, and "cut two new teeth at the age of eighty-seven." She had no near relations, and refused to see those more distantly related. One pleasant characteristic is recorded: she had a large well-kept garden, in which she passed much of her time reading. Although she lived entirely through the reigns of the First and Second Georges, and far into that of the Third, she continued to wear the fashions of the time of George the First, as being those of her married life. Her powdered hair was turned up over a tache or cushion; a cap over it was tied under the chin; and three or four curls hung down to the neck. She generally wore a silk gown, with a long train and deep flounces, very long waist, and tightly laced up to her neck, round which a kind of ruff or frill was worn; the sleeves of the gown came down below the elbows, and were terminated by four or five large cuffs. She wore a large flat bonnet, high-heeled shoes, a large black silk cloak, trimmed round with lace; and carried a gold-headed cane. She walked in such a costume as this round the small enclosure of Cold Bath Square; and was spoken of by the neighbours as Lady Lewson. Her household consisted of one servant (an old man), two lapdogs, and a cat; and these were her only companions. She survived till extreme old age; indeed, we believe she was one of those to whom the attention of Mr. Thom was directed, as claimants to the honour of centenarianism.

Some odd women, poor things, have been rendered odd by compulsory isolation and semi-starvation for many days; such, for instance, as Elizabeth Woodcock, a farmer's wife at Impington, near Cambridge. One February night in 1799, returning from Cambridge market on horseback, her horse became restive; she dismounted, he ran off, and she after him, but unavailingly. Sitting down exhausted under a hedge, she became partly insensible, but was conscious that snow was falling and gradually enveloping her, until at length the thickness of snow rose to the height of her head as she sat. She had just strength and discernment enough to keep open a little hole in the snow, break off a small twig near at hand, and attach a handkerchief to it as a signal. She was conscious of the alternations of day and night, but slept little; heard the church bells, the rolling of vehicles, the barking

of dogs, the bleating of sheep, and the voices of gipsies; but she could neither utter a sound nor make a perceptible movement. Eight days and nights passed in this way; during which time her garments were alternately wet through with melting snow, and stiffened with frost. At last relief came. The horse, on Saturday the second of the month, had trotted home without his mistress; the husband, aided by friends, searched the roads and fields day after day, but could gain no tidings of her. Not until Sunday the ninth was the handkerchief espied by a farmer going to Cambridge; he had to wade through a great accumulation of snow to get at the spot, but there he found poor Elizabeth. Aid was immediately sent for—horse, chaise, blankets, food, drink, and willing hands. She fainted on being lifted, but reached home in safety. She could tell her friends that hunger had not distressed her much during her strange life of eight days under the snow; and that she had quenched her thirst with small bits of hard snow. All her toes, thoroughly frost-bitten, had to be amputated one by one; and blotches of red chilblains covered nearly the whole body. She was carried off in June, partly as a consequence of this terrible episode in her life, partly from other ailments.

Still longer in duration was the enforced isolation and abstinence of a young woman named Cecilia Steers. In 1820, while walking from Doddington to Rodmersham, she fell into a dry well or chalk pit. The pit being thirty feet deep, she could not climb up; and all her attempts to make her voice heard proved fruitless. She lived on day after day, from the eighth to the twenty-second of November, supporting life by a little water that trickled from the melting snow. At last hearing some children playing near at hand, she succeeded in attracting their attention, and was rescued.

One more odd woman shall be a pretty little creature, who had a large heart in a very small body. In the second half of the last century a Polish dwarf, named Joseph Boruwlaski, attracted much attention on the Continent, and got into a good position on the estate of a nobleman. Short as he was, about three feet six inches high, he had a sister, Anastasia, very much shorter. The tiny being, elegant in form and gentle in disposition, fell in love with a poor young officer; she "never told her love,"

but endeavoured, in various ways, to assist him without his guessing the source of the assistance. Her love and her life ended together; she was carried off by small pox at the age of twenty-two.

## A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," "NO ALTERNATIVE,"  
&c. &c.

### CHAPTER XXXVIII. DRAWING THE SWORD.

It is difficult to say, after this passage of arms between them (which is fortunately interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Durgan), which is the more distrustful of the other—Miss Mervyn or Miss Grange. The former does not for an instant underrate her adversary, although she dislikes her with the dislike that only a woman who feels herself to be supplanted by an inferior, can bring to bear upon that person. But Charlotte Grange goes even further than this in her power of appreciating a foe; she actually credits that foe with the capability of pursuing the same line of conduct as herself, and guards herself carefully against being stabbed in the back, and undermined generally.

It is true that she has during this interval of incessant intercourse (which has been established by means of Grange pertinacity, and antique furniture sketching) acquired the right to call Mr. Forest by his christian name. He calls her Charlotte—a name by the way which he abhors, but which she has taught him to utter glibly—rather than remain on the stolid commonplace ground of mere acquaintanceship, which is indicated by the word "Miss." How he has been led into the error—for he feels it to be one—he does not know. But he finds himself calling her Charlotte, and hears himself addressed as Frank, with the ease of custom, before her people and his friend Bellairs.

The knowledge that his cousin Kate—whom he still likes intensely—intensely dislikes this woman into whose power he is drifting, acts upon him as an irritant rather than a check. He has a feeling, which he does not word even to himself, that Kate, though she does not want him herself, does not want any other woman to have him. He has not sufficient generosity to accredit her with either affection or judgment in the matter. He puts it all down to jealousy of a small order, and tries to make himself believe that she would have developed the same antagonism

had his choice fallen on some universally acknowledged, "perfect woman nobly planned."

A vague sensation of discomfort seizes him, whenever he finds himself alone with anyone who may possibly choose to discuss Miss Grange's claims to his consideration. He has checked Bellairs several times already by the assertion that "she's an awfully nice, clever girl—just the sort of girl to make a heaven of a home for the fellow who's lucky enough to get her." Believing fighting the air to be a feeble practice, Bellairs does not combat the delusion, for "nothing of that sort lasts long with Frank" he tells himself, as he sees Frank winding the coils round himself closer and closer every day.

This morning it has been sorely against Frank's will, that Miss Grange has betaken herself to Breagh Place unattended by him. That she has a motive in doing so, he half fears, for in spite of himself it is impressed upon him that there is a motive in the simplest action of this quiet girl. But he does not for a moment suspect her real motive, which is to sow the seed of belief in his being in love with her in his cousin Kate's mind.

Bray seems very dull to him, however, after Charlotte's departure for Mrs. Durgan's place. He has ridden over from Lugnaquilla, intending to loiter about the picturesque secluded Dargle, and superintend Miss Grange's sketching all day, and, when he finds that he is left to his own devices, while she goes to pay "a mere ceremonial visit" as she says, he feels sulkily disposed to review his position with Miss Grange, and to think that she had no right, "after all," to go off in this way and leave him to be dull, either by himself, or with her "detestable brother and sister."

In fact, the habit of the woman is upon him; and here in this place, where he is cut off from his home pursuits and home annoyances, he has grown too much accustomed to her manner of passing away his time, to patiently submit to being made his own custodian for awhile.

He contrives to stir up his own interest presently, by conjecturing a variety of things concerning the three women who are together at Breagh Place, none of which bear the remotest resemblance to the truth. He pictures Charlotte (who is a capital talker when alone with him) amusing and bewitching Mrs. Durgan and Kate, by the flow of her quiet humour, and power of narrating incidents,

in a way that is prejudicial to the persons to whom they refer, without being openly ill-natured. He knows that she has this art, but he is pleased with her at present, and fancies that it is a womanly and noble one, and feels himself injured rather than otherwise in that he is not present to be edified by it.

Actuated by these mixed feelings, he presently gets on his horse, and rides over to Breagh Place, resolving rather to brave being laughed at about Charlotte, than to bear the burden of himself any longer. "They'll see I'm running after her," he confesses to himself, half shamefacedly, "and Kate will probably get on the stilts; but I can't help it."

A slight chill falls upon him when he finds himself in their midst by-and-by. The mere power of her will has caused Miss Grange to be invited to luncheon by Mrs. Durgan, to whom Charlotte insists on talking rather confidentially concerning "Frank," and his literary prospects, and surface weaknesses. Kate meanwhile sits silently by, half doubting that there is any foundation for this fatal familiarity, and still wholly fearing that there may be.

"He is a man who requires sympathy," Miss Grange asserts; "and he has never had it from his own family; he has told me so himself, and I can see that he feels it bitterly, poor fellow," she adds with malicious emphasis, as she sees Kate wince under the sting of the statement.

"You imagine that you can give it to him, I suppose?" Mrs. Durgan says, with a laugh that is not complimentary to the one whom she addresses. In spite of a certain dagger that Kate is unconsciously pressing well home to Mrs. Durgan's heart, the latter lady likes her well, and is strengthened in that first openly expressed opinion of hers, that Kate "couldn't be mean." Therefore she does not hesitate to draw the sword and use it, when Kate's opponent waves a flag of defiance.

"He imagines that I can, at any rate," Miss Grange says, turning large calm eyes full upon her interlocutor as she speaks. "Frank tells me that you don't know much about them," she continues, addressing Kate as if she were an outsider; "but from what you do know of them, shouldn't you be inclined to think his sisters shallow and frivolous?"

"You forget that you are speaking of my cousins," Kate says, and scarlet waves of indignation ebb and flow over her face as she says it. Then, even as these shells

are bursting, Frank comes in, and, after the usual custom on these occasions, the guiltless look guilty, and the guilty guiltless.

If put to the crucial test of speaking on their words of honour, neither Mrs. Durgan nor Kate would feel themselves to be social sinners. But now, when Frank comes into their midst, and looks at them suspiciously and at Miss Grange sympathetically, they feel as if they had fallen short and been found wanting in some way or other: as if, in fact, they had not been merciful to the stranger within their gates.

"I am so glad you've come," Miss Grange murmurs, with an ardour that is foreign to her general manner. She half holds her plump white hand out towards him too as she speaks, and Frank finds himself taking the extended offering, under the astonished gaze of his cousin Kate, before he thinks of attempting to salute Mrs. Durgan, whom he has nominally come to visit.

"I am so glad you've come," Miss Grange repeats, and this time she laughs blithely and throws a glance aside at Kate, and altogether pourtrays by her manner that she is perfectly at rest now "he" has come, in a way that thrills Kate with wrath at the assurance which she still prays may have no foundation in fact.

They pass a half hour that is disagreeable to the last degree to two of them, and that is not altogether a period of unmitigated bliss to Frank, who feels himself to be a disputed point, and who knows himself to be but a mere weather-cock between the rival blasts of duty and inclination. The former drags him back every now and again, back under Kate's influence, but the latter draws him softly on, and prostrates him, as it were, under the influence of the woman who never lets it slacken for want of incessant attention. In fact Kate represents a past, in which he sustained a defeat, while Charlotte represents a present, in which he may have it all his own way if he pleases.

"They're not engaged yet, take comfort in that thought, and intervene before he compasses his own destruction by proposing to her," Mrs. Durgan says in a low voice to Kate, as Kate makes the necessity for attending to the comfort of the invalid the excuse for murmuring some expression of hopelessness in her friend's ear.

"She seems to be well satisfied with the arrangement, whatever it is, as it stands," Kate says impatiently. "He's enervated by her wiles now, but if you could see him as he really is, you would know what a dear

fellow he is, and understand why I am so anxious about him."

Mrs. Durgan looks up brightly, hopefully, enthusiastically almost.

"See here, Kate," she says, "a word from you in love, not in friendship!—what man would barter love and slavery for friendship and freedom?—but in love, would bring him—I won't say 'back' to you, because I don't believe he's ever strayed in reality—but away from her. Utter it!"

"I can't," Kate laughs, but there is vexation in her laugh, Mrs. Durgan detects; "don't think that I want him in love—not that he'd come to me if I did—but she's not the one to win him."

"She's the one to woo, and those who woo so artistically often win" Mrs. Durgan says, shaking her head. "Look at them now! there she is, while we are wasting our time in idle talk, making him believe that she has been struggling against circumstances all the morning, and that we have been intensely disagreeable to her; and in short, that she has been playing the martyr's part for his dear sake. Go to him, and be outspoken, Kate, and tell her I want to speak to her."

Kate feels herself impelled, by Mrs. Durgan's energy, to obey Mrs. Durgan's instructions, but she dislikes doing so exceedingly. It is an odious task to set oneself, this of interrupting a conversation between two people, who are openly manifesting the feeling that all the world is nought to them, and that they only want each other. But in this case Kate is led on to do it, partly because she really feels that Frank is worthy of a little sacrifice of pride on her part, and partly because there is a passive defiance in Miss Grange's manner which rouses all Kate's fighting blood, and makes her long to strike a straightforward open blow.

"Mrs. Durgan has made me her envoy to you, Miss Grange," she begins, as she draws near to them, and she sees that Charlotte shrugs patiently deprecating shoulders at the interruption, "she wishes you to go and talk to her about some ferns—you're learned in them we have heard—and I want you for a few minutes, Frank," Kate continues, putting her hand within his arm, with the old caressing gesture that he can no more resist now than he could long ago.

Miss Grange knows the exact worth of every weapon that any adversary can employ in such a warfare as this, and she knows that Kate can strike sharply home

if she pleases. "But she's too refined to coarsely condemn, and anything short of coarse condemnation will fail to affect Frank against me now," the quiet adventures thinks, as she walks off rather vauntingly, leaving the field open to her enemy, after giving Frank along, lingering, clinging look, that bespeaks a wealth of intimacy between them.

"And now what is it, Kate," Frank asks, as they saunter out from the conservatory, "if we are going to stroll through these woods, we may bring the others along with us, mayn't we?"

She turns her face and looks at him, and sees that his mouth is twitching, and his eyes dancing with suppressed laughter. He evidently partly fathoms her design of warning him, is mirthfully aware of it, and by no means disposed to thwart her exposition of feeling; at the same time she perceives that he will not be one whit impressed by it. All her fancied eloquence takes flight. She can no more bring herself to utter any cautionary words, now that Miss Grange has fearlessly left the field free, than she could stab that young lady in the back.

"Have you nothing to tell me, Frank?" she asks persuasively, and her manner insensibly becomes impregnated with some of the old fondness, that had been so infinitely delightful to him in the days of old.

"Nothing whatever, dear," he replies, and his manner is abstracted, and his gaze wanders back through the conservatory, and fixes itself upon the lady who is lazily looking at ferns, the lady whose perfect repose is apparently by no means disturbed by the fear that her cause may be suffering during her enforced absence.

"How long do you stay at Lugnaquilla?"

"We're all thinking of making a start next week."

"All! Is Captain Bellairs going so soon?" Kate asks, forgetting the interest of the hour in the interest of her life.

"No, no; Bellairs stays on here—he's sweet on his cousin, I believe," Frank says, as if whether Bellairs were, or were not, was an utterly unimportant matter to everyone.

"Then whom do you mean by 'all,'" Kate persists, recurring to the interest of the hour.

"The Granges and myself," he answers unhesitatingly.

"The Granges have ceased to be obnoxious to you?" she says.

"Have they, by Jove! not a bit of it. That fellow and his wife are two of the greatest bores out."

"Then why do you attach yourself to them, when you could stay on at dear sweet Lugnaquilla, with a man who is less of a bore than any other human being?"

"Because there happens to be a human being with the Granges at present, who bores me even less than Bellairs," Frank laughs. "Now you have driven me into a corner, Kate, and compelled me to decide as to the cause of my recently developed toleration for the Granges, I know it to be that girl," and he inclines his head in the direction of the guileless Charlotte.

"That girl!" Kate repeats with angry contempt; "don't tell me in earnest that she has cast a glamour over you."

"She would be a cleverer girl even than she is, if she could 'cast a glamour' as you call it, over me," Frank says, with genuinely manly conceit; "but she's just the kind of girl that any fellow who sees much of her must fall madly in love with."

"Frank!" Kate gasps.

"Why, you're not surprised, are you?" Frank questions, looking with foolish fondness in the direction of the disputed point. "I didn't quite realise—I never told myself even till you asked me; if you hadn't almost worded it for me, I should have gone on probably in unsuspicion of the real state of my feelings; but now I know that if I could contribute to her happiness in any way, even by giving her to another fellow, I'd do it."

Kate looks at him in pity and surprise, and admires him, in spite of her reason and judgment, for his chivalry. One shot she cannot resist firing, though she knows that it will glance off, and neither kill nor cure his misplaced passion.

"Get some richer man than yourself to marry her, then, if you'd contribute to her happiness, Frank," she says, and Frank looks at her wistfully, and replies,

"You hurt me more than you can imagine, by even feigning to doubt her perfect integrity."

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